



Opening creative spaces in our faith communities for persons with disabilities

Daily Prayer

Prayer Intention:
For persons with disabilities
and their families

Father in heaven,
you created us in your divine image.

May every person living with a
disability experience true belonging
in a loving community.

Guide us to pursue our call to work for
justice and fullness of life for all persons
with disabilities.

Graciously help us to open new and
creative spaces to invite all persons
to participate meaningfully in parish
and community life.

Help us to contribute to the Church
and, together, be a sign of the unity
of the Body of Christ.

Amen.

St. Margaret of Castello

St. Margaret of Castello was born to a wealthy family in Florence, Italy in 1287. She had several congenital disabilities including blindness and curvature of the spine and never grew beyond 4 feet tall. Her parents, ashamed of her disabilities, locked her away as a very young child in a room by the family chapel. They later brought her to a Franciscan Shrine, expecting miraculous healing but abandoned her when that was not forthcoming. She was eventually taken in by nuns and later adopted and went on to live a life of prayer, penance and service to God. Throughout her life, she accepted her physical challenges without complaint, serving as a witness of love, perseverance and faith to others. She died at 33 years of age and was canonized by Pope Francis in 2021.



For more
information on
St. Margaret of
Castello, read here:
[www.bit.ly/
StMargaretCastello](http://www.bit.ly/StMargaretCastello)



National
Family & Life Week
May 7-14, 2023 Love one another



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Daily Activity for the Parish:

In your parish community, can you identify ways to open creative spaces for persons with disabilities to foster a sense of belonging for everyone? For some practical ideas in your parish, explore "[*Beyond the Ramp: A Parish Guide to Welcoming Persons with Disabilities*](#)", written by Connie Price.

Additional Resources:

1. David Rizzo, [*Faith, Family and Children with Special Needs*](#)
2. Megan Gannon, [*Special Saints for Special People: Stories of Saints with Disabilities*](#)
3. For Catechists, teachers, parents, families:
Loyola Press Resources for Special Needs Ministry:
[*Special Needs | Loyola Press*](#)

Daily Activity for Families:

On 3 December 2022, in his message for the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, Pope Francis spoke about a "magisterium of fragility ... a charisma by which you—dear sisters and brothers with disabilities—can enrich the Church. Your presence 'may help transform the actual situations in which we live, making them more human and more welcoming. Without vulnerability, without limits, without obstacles to overcome, there would be no true humanity.'"

As a family, watch together the 4-minute video below. You will get to know a priest from Australia who was born legally blind and is a witness to a joyful faith lived within human fragility and limits.

"We" not "they," disability in the life of the Church
www.bit.ly/lamChurch

Discussion Questions for Families

What surprised you about Fr. Justin Glyn, SJ?

In your own life, do you live with certain limitations or vulnerabilities? How does your faith help you with these experiences?

After hearing Fr. Justin's story, do you have any ideas about how to open creative spaces to promote the meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in your faith community?



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